

**Proclamation 3559****NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER, 1963****By the President of the United States of America****October 8, 1963****A Proclamation**

Our forefathers declared the independence of our Nation "with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence." In that reliance, they set forth the conviction that all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with unalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

More than a century and three-quarters after our Nation was dedicated to that proposition, it may truly be reaffirmed that "We are a religious people whose institutions presuppose a Supreme Being." Conscious of the religious character of our people, the Congress of the United States by a joint resolution of April 17, 1952, provided that "The President shall set aside and proclaim a suitable day each year, other than a Sunday, as a National Day of Prayer, on which the people of the United States may turn to God in prayer and meditation, at churches, in groups, and as individuals."

66 Stat. 64.  
36 USC 185.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN F. KENNEDY, President of the United States of America, do set aside and proclaim Wednesday, the sixteenth day of October 1963, as the National Day of Prayer.

On this day, let us acknowledge anew our reliance upon the divine Providence which guided our founding fathers. Let each of us, according to his own custom and his own faith, give thanks to his Creator for the divine assistance which has nurtured the noble ideals in which this Nation was conceived.

Most especially, let us humbly acknowledge that we have not yet succeeded in obtaining for all of our people the blessings of liberty to which all are entitled. On this day, in this year, as we concede these shortcomings, let each of us pray that through our failures we may derive the wisdom, the courage, and the strength to secure for every one of our citizens the full measure of dignity, freedom, and brotherhood for which all men are qualified by their common fatherhood under God.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the United States of America to be affixed.

DONE at the City of Washington this eighth day of October in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and sixty-three, and of [SEAL] the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and eighty-eighth.

**JOHN F. KENNEDY**

By the President:

**DEAN RUSK,**  
*Secretary of State.*